

TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY



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COMPANY ADMITS SLAMMING VIOLATIONS; AGREES TO PAY FINE

NASHVILLE – A provider of long-distance telephone services has admitted to engaging in acts of telephone slamming and has agreed to a TRA settlement of \$25,000.

A TRA investigation stemming from consumer complaints revealed that LCI International Telecom Corp., now doing business as Qwest Communications Services, switched the long-distance service provider of two consumers by forging their signatures. Moreover, (15) other consumers have also filed complaints with the TRA alleging that Qwest changed their long-distance service provider without their authorization.

As defined, slamming is the switching of a person's long-distance service provider without their knowledge or consent. The practice is illegal in Tennessee.

In response to the TRA investigation, Qwest agreeably conducted its own internal investigation and found that violations had indeed occurred.

According to Qwest officials, the company's independent marketing agents, an organization responsible for soliciting the company's services, were responsible for the forged signatures.

As a result of the company's investigation, the independent marketing agents responsible for the acts were terminated.

In addition to the \$25,000 fine, and as a resolution to the case, Qwest has agreed to comply with a number of TRA imposed terms to help it maintain a high level of accountability and statewide customer service when processing new orders for long-distance telephone service.

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Among the (7) terms agreed to, Qwest will:

1. For a period of (12) months, submit quarterly reports to the TRA containing a summary of all transaction disputes filed with either Qwest or the local telephone company by Tennessee consumers.
2. Submit to the TRA a detailed plan of action to be taken against any marketing agent and/or distributor who receives more than (20) transaction disputes during a 3-month period.

Likewise, to guard against future cases of signature forgery, Qwest has also agreed to report to the TRA or a state law enforcement official, the name of the marketing representative responsible for the act for possible investigation.

Says Eddie Roberson of the TRA's Consumer Services Division, "We are satisfied with the response of Qwest towards this case and we are equally satisfied with the case's outcome."

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